

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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15

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-07 PM-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 IO-13 /052 W

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R 311820Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1583

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 7851

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, PE, US

SUBJECT: REACTION TO PANMUNJOM INDICENT

1. THE PANMUNJOM INCIDENT RECEIVED FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE IN THE MAJOR LIMA DAILY "EL COMERCIO" UNDER AUGUST 19 HEADLINE "NORTH KOREANS KILLED TWO U.S. OFFICIALS IN DEMILITARIZED ZONE". ARTICLE WAS FROM AP. ON AUGUST 20 "EL COMERCIO" RAN A FRONT-PAGE AP STORY HEADLINED "U.S. REENFORCES ITS AIR ARM IN KOREA AND PUTS TROOPS ON ALERT". NORTH KOREAN VERSION OF THE INCIDENT WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT SUPPORTED IN AP COVERAGE.

2. HOWEVER, AN EARLIER ARTICLE IN "EL COMERCIO" DEALING WITH THE HISTORY OF THE KOREAN CONFLICT WAS UNABASHED NORTH KOREAN PROPAGANDA CARRIED WITHOUT ATTRIBUTION. IN WIDE RANGING CONVERSATION OF CHARGE WITH FONOFF AMERICAN DEPARTMENT CHIEF ALVAREZ CALDERON, THE SUBJECT OF KOREA AROSE. ALVAREZ CALDERON STATED THAT THE "EL COMERCIO" ARTICLE ON THE KOREAN QUESTION HAD BEEN LAMENTABLE. ALSO, GENERAL VILLALOBOS, CHIEF OF THE GOP INFORMATION SYSTEM (SINADI), TOLD ARMY ATTACHE THAT THE "EL COMERCIO" ARTICLE WAS UNBALANCED AND THAT THE PAPER WOULD BE DIRECTED TO PRINT A SOUTH KOREAN INTERPRETATION OF EVENTS WHICH THE SOUTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR HAD ASKED TO BE PUBLISHED. ON AUGUST 26 "EL COMERCIO" DEVOTED ALMOST ONE-FOURTH OF ITS INTERNATIONAL PAGE TO A LETTER FROM THE SOUTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR OUTLINING THE HISTORY OF THE KOREAN SITUATION.

3. GOP VIEWS ON THE PANMUNJOM INCIDENT ITSELF HAVE NOT BEEN  
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EXPRESSED. WE CANNOT DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT THE INCIDENT MAY

AFFECT GOP POSTURE ON THE KOREAN ISSUE AT THE UN BUT WIRE SERVICE  
COVERAGE PORTRAYS NORTH KOREA AS CLEARLY AT FAULT. WE NOTE  
THAT THE GOP PRESENTED A RESERVATION ON THE KOREAN RESOLUTION  
AT THE COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT BECAUSE IT WAS ONE OF THOSE  
RESOLUTIONS WHICH WOULD "HARM COUNTRIES (IN THIS CASE SOUTH KOREA)  
WITH WHICH PERU MAINTAINS NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS".  
SMITH

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, DMZ, PERSONAL OPINION, BORDER INCIDENTS, DEATHS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 31 AUG 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** blochd0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** blochd0  
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**Subject:** REACTION TO PANMUNJOM INDICENT  
**TAGS:** PFOR, KN, KS, PE, US, (ALVAREZ CALDERON), (VILLALOBOS)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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